

Says nuclear energy must be part of America's clean energy strategy, calls for overturning the moratorium on nuclear energy in Minnesota

St. Paul, MN – Today, Congressman Tim Walz and Congressman Erik Paulsen joined business and labor leaders and state officials to announce support for a bipartisan, comprehensive approach to energy strategy and to call for an end to Minnesota's moratorium on new nuclear power plants.

"We must all work together to solve the energy challenges we face. Nuclear energy can help us achieve energy independence, create jobs, power our homes, our schools and our workplaces affordably and address the serious threat of climate change," said Walz. "Minnesota has the potential to own the next generation in clean energy innovation and technology and the science and data is clear: we can build modern, safer, more efficient nuclear power plants."

"Solving our nation's energy challenges requires a comprehensive, bipartisan approach and nuclear energy must play a major role in that effort," Paulsen said. "Nuclear energy is clean, renewable and, unlike many other energy sources, able to provide massive amounts of energy nationwide. We need to take action now to increase the availability of nuclear energy across the country, and Minnesota has the opportunity to lead the way."

“A strong state economy depends upon a reliable supply of electricity at competitive prices. Minnesota is marching toward a dangerous crossroads in the ability to provide ample base-load power, and our options to meet that need have been unnecessarily limited by the Legislature,” said Bill Blazar, vice president of the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce. “They can take a positive step next year by repealing the outdated ban on consideration of nuclear energy, a carbon-free base-load resource. Nuclear power makes sense for all the right reasons. Nuclear plants are large scale, reliable and friendly to the environment.”

“Currently, the Department of Energy has more than twenty applications for construction of nuclear power plants throughout the United States. These plants would supply carbon-free, low-cost base load power for the energy grid as well as creating good paying jobs both during construction and in the operation of the plants,” said Harry Melander, President of the Minnesota Building and Construction Trades. “We feel that Minnesota should lift the moratorium on nuclear power plant construction and that nuclear energy should be part of a balanced Minnesota energy policy that curbs greenhouse gas emissions and addresses global climate change.”

In June, Congressman Tim Walz announced he would continue fighting for the transformative energy legislation he helped write during 2008 with a broad bipartisan coalition of House lawmakers. HR 2227, the American Independence and Clean Energy Act of 2009, an updated version of the bill from the 110th Congress, currently has 36 bipartisan cosponsors, including Minnesotans Tim Walz, Erik Paulsen and Collin Peterson.

“This bipartisan energy bill reinvests royalties from oil revenue payments from increased energy

exploration into clean energy innovation, conservation and reducing carbon emissions putting Americans back to work and on the path toward energy independence,” said Walz.

“By increasing offshore drilling, and in turn using those revenues to expand clean, alternative energy sources, this bill is a win-win,” Paulsen said. “The plan takes an ‘all of the above’ approach, which will mean more jobs, more affordable energy, a cleaner environment and increased national security.”

The legislation would take 5%, approximately \$110 billion, of revenue from leasing revenues and royalties from offshore oil and gas production and use it to promote the deployment of carbon free technologies which would include loan guarantees for commercial nuclear power plants, the disposition and recycling/reprocessing of spent fuel from nuclear power plants, and the financing of long term safe storage of spent fuel.

Remarks as prepared for delivery and fact sheets on nuclear energy are included in the attached packet.